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friars of this convent, than there does clear water in the best monastery of Christendom.'

The abbey was richly endowed, and invested with archiepiscopal jurisdiction. In its archives was deposited a roll, bearing the names of the followers of William, among whom he had shared the conquered land. The grand altar was placed on the very spot where the banner of the hapless Harold had been unfurled, and here prayers were perpetually to be offered up for the repose of all who had fallen in the contest. 'All this pomp and solemnity,' adds Mr. Palgrave, 'has passed away like a dream! The perpetual prayer has ceased forever; the roll of battle is rent; the escutcheons of the Norman lineages are trodden in the dust. A dark and reedy pool marks where the abbey once reared its stately towers, and nothing but the foundations of the choir remain for the gaze of the idle visiter, and the instruction of the moping antiquary.'*

ART. IV.—*Journal of the Landers.*

Journal of an Expedition to explore the Course and Termination of the Niger: with a Narrative of a Voyage down that River to its Termination. By RICHARD and JOHN LANDER. J. and J. Harper. New York. 1832.

We shall certainly be justified in pronouncing this work one of the most deeply interesting, in its kind, which has appeared in modern times. Independently of the very spirited running style of travellers, quite as good-humored and shrewd as they are energetic, and of the novelty attached to descriptions of new countries and people, and to a personal narrative of unusual vicissitude, it is sufficient to immortalize the Journal and its Authors alike, that it records the discovery of the long-sought termination of the Niger,—the river of Herodotus, 'full of crocodiles and flowing to the east,'—the Nile of Strabo,—the Arabian 'Nile of the Negroes,' pouring into the 'Sea of Darkness,'—the object of more inquiry and the occasion of more effort, perhaps, than any other locality on the face of the globe.

* Palgrave, Hist. Eng., Cap. XV.

A synopsis of the exertions and theories made and maintained for the solution of this great geographical mystery, from a period of five hundred years before the Christian era to the discovery of 1830, would doubtless furnish matter enough of amusement or improvement to all such as are inclined to be witty or wise at the expense of their grandfathers. For the present, however, we shall be content with ascertaining what has been actually learned and done, having, practically at least, rather more to do with the 'termination' than with the far-flowing and misty tide of speculation, which, like the river itself, has heretofore been the cause of quite as much entertainment as benefit, and of perplexity greater than either.

We say practically ;—for we do not apprehend this grand problem to have been solved only for the edification of contending literati, or the gratification of the spectators at large. A broad, rich, magnificent territory has been opened to view ; and all its immense population, of a race the easiest on earth to be civilized, on a soil the most fertile the sun shines upon, has been brought forward, as it were, to invite the freest access of every species of mercantile and moral commerce which the world can offer. Its resources, its necessities, and still more its capacities, are beyond estimate. Is there no field here for the missionary,* and no fund for the merchant ? Will our worthy neighbors, the English, claim and command the whole benefit, with the whole credit, of this last continent, as that liberal-minded functionary, Alexander the Sixth, of Rome, once undertook to divide the larger part of the globe between Portugal and Spain ? Will they make such a contract of purveyance and pre-emption with 'Mr. Gunn,' 'King Jacket,' Duke Ephraim, or any other potentate of the region round about, that the Niger shall be hermetically sealed, forever, against every thing but a Thames steam-boat or a Liverpool oil-craft ? We trow not. The same enterprise and the same energy, which, long before Burke's time, 'infested all seas,' and which, within the year past, have mounted the Missouri, two thousand miles, by the aid of this same machinery of Fulton, will soon traverse alike the Sea of Darkness and the River of Crocodiles. The Felâtahs will turn white

* Since writing the text, we understand that definitive measures have already been taken in this city for the establishment of a school and station on the Niger, as soon as the English expeditions shall have made that design practicable.

with Lowell cottons ; Yankee hats will supersede, in Yariba, that elegant ornament of man's head, the cow's tail ; Ephraim will add a box of pine nutmegs to his present rare collection of keep-sakes ; and his majesty, Jacket, of small-beer memory, will give as much for a wooden clock as he did for a cap made of the worn-out skirts of Mr. Lander's green baize spencer.—But our enthusiasm mounts apace.

The result of the expedition of which the details are given in the volumes before us has been to increase our knowledge of the Niger to such an extent, that at the present time no part of its whole length remains unexplored, with the exception of a few hundred miles between Yàoorie,—a large city and kingdom in about 12° north latitude, the most northerly point of the Landers' route,—and Timbuctoo, which, after having been so long sought for in vain by travellers from all parts of Europe, has been recently visited by the Frenchman Caillié. The continuity of the stream between these termini is placed beyond a doubt by the most conclusive circumstantial evidence. The Niger above Timbuctoo, by Park called the Joliba, has been repeatedly visited in all directions ; and the Landers, on the other side, have now succeeded in navigating the entire river below Yàoorie, to its *embouchure* in the Gulf of Guinea, a travelling distance of perhaps a thousand miles.

The Niger is found to run in almost every direction except due west, and this is another of its numerous peculiarities. Rising in about 11° north latitude, among the same mountains which supply the source of the Senegal, it begins with flowing towards the north. At Bammakoo, a large place visited by Mungo Park, the principal stream flows a little north of east to Silla, to which point Park accurately determined its course ; thence north-east to Timbuctoo ; thence, by conjectural calculation, south-east to Yàoorie ; and thence south, south-east, and south-west to its mouth. The description of the river by the traveller just named and others is familiar to all readers. The portion of it explored last, is quite similar, though, of course, with those occasional differences which always distinguish the lower section of a large stream from the upper.

The Landers first saw it at Boossà, where Park and his associates met with their unhappy fate. Here, in its widest part, the breadth did not exceed a stone's-throw, the water being lower than usual, and the travellers were naturally

enough disappointed: a short day's journey north of this, the branch on which the town of Kagogie stands, measures about a mile;—so much does the character of the stream change within that distance. Even boat navigation was impracticable in this quarter: the travellers ascended by land because a canoe could not be paddled up without 'the greatest difficulty and danger on account of the rocks,'—and hence the misfortune of Park. At Kagogie, it is rendered so shallow by large sand-banks, that 'a child might wade across it.'

At this point, canoes and canoe-men were procured, and the party pursued the stream till they fell into the main branch of the river, and then a new phase is presented us:

'We found it flowing from north to south, through a rich and charming country, which seemed to improve in appearance the further we advanced. We were propelled at a good rate up a channel, which, from half a mile in breadth, gradually widened to rather better than a mile. Beautiful, spreading and spiry trees adorned the country on each side of the river, like a park; corn, nearly ripe, waved over the water's edge; large open villages appeared every half hour; and herds of spotted cattle were observed grazing and enjoying the cool of the shade. The appearance of the river for several miles was no less enchanting than its borders; it was as smooth as a lake; canoes, laden with sheep and goats, were paddled by women down its almost imperceptible current; swallows and a variety of aquatic birds were sporting over its glassy surface, which was ornamented by a number of pretty little islands.'—Vol. I. p. 252.

During the ensuing day, the river widened to two miles, for as great a length as the eye could compass; its regularity and calmness giving it the appearance of a vast canal, while the equally uniform borders resembled a dwarf wall. At a little distance from the margin, they were broken up into hills and hollows, shaded occasionally with the massy foliage of fine trees, and almost covered with villages. But soon afterwards, the banks became black rugged rocks; the hamlets disappeared; and the broad bosom of the river was filled with a motley mass of shallows, quicksands, and islands. Indeed the most navigable and beautiful water just described was 'in most places extremely shallow, though in others deep enough to float a frigate.' The travellers were continually running their canoe upon rocks and sand-banks, and, but for the good-humor of the boatmen, might have been subjected to no small inconveniences.

As it was, delay was their greatest trial. The old chief of one of the villages where they landed enjoined the leader or 'King' of the crew, on re-embarking, to be careful of his charge. 'Careful!' answered the man: 'careful!—do I not know that white men are more precious than eggs?' This conclusive appeal silenced the chief, but not the travellers. They became weary of the man's excessive laziness, and attempted to stimulate him by pointing out the canoes which left him behind. 'Ah!' he replied; 'Kings do not travel like common men; I must go as slow as possible.' Presently they came to what the fur-traders upon our north-western waters call a carrying-place, the stream being altogether impassable. A range of rocks ran directly across, like a dam, so that the water, finding but one narrow passage, rushed through it with an impetuosity which overturned every thing in its course. But having surmounted this difficulty, the remaining distance to Yàoorie was again broad, still, and beautiful as can be imagined. Not a sand-bank or a breaker was perceptible. The borders were green as Eden. The soil approved itself in immense patches of corn, rice, indigo and cotton; groups of laborers toiled briskly among them to the beating of a drum; and the travellers, in fine spirits, with a fresh bland air from the south, moved onward along the edge of two lovely little islands, clothed in verdure, 'which at a short distance looked as charming as the fabled gardens of Hesperia.'

At Yàoorie, as we have already observed, the voyage terminated, and the travellers soon after returned to Boossà. But, lest our description of the river between these two points should be taken as a fair specimen of its whole course, it should be understood, that the Landers were told that there were neither rocks nor sand-banks above Yàoorie or below Boossà. How literally this description is to be construed in regard to the upper section, may be inferred from the details of the subsequent navigation below; in the main, however, it is correct. In its natural bed, at this season, (June,) the river here runs between one and two miles an hour; among interruptions, and in the rainy months, more rapidly. After the 'malca,' or fourteen-days' rain, it is very generally navigated in all directions by the canoe-men with perfect ease and safety: in particular sections where the towns are mostly located, such is always the case. The market of Waree, a little above Boossà, is attended by myriads of people from the neigh-

boring kingdoms, who frequently cover the stream for a considerable distance with vast numbers of small craft. The extraordinary narrowness of the river at Boossà itself, already mentioned, is accounted for by the supposition that a large portion of the water passes through subterranean channels.

It is not a little amusing to learn, that the natives of this region agitate their theories about the Niger with all the pertinacity of the learned in civilized countries. A discussion of the Landers upon this subject was on one occasion interrupted by a shrewd fellow who came forward to assert, that at no great distance from Boossà, the river took a turn to the eastward, and disembogued itself into the lake Tshad in Bornou—which, by the way, was the theory of Major Denham. Sultan Bello, of Nouffie, suggested this inestimable fact, together with the following *explanation* attached to the map which he furnished that gentleman, and which may be seen in the appendix to the English edition of Mr. Clapperton's travels. It will sufficiently illustrate the clearness and extent of that sovereign's information.

'Now the great river Cowára [Niger] comes, and here is its representation. This great river is the largest in all the territories of Hàussa: we know not of its source, nor of any one who has seen it. It rushes and precipitates itself through the country, from left to right, and contains many islands, inhabited by fishermen, herdsmen, husbandmen, and settlers. As to the variety of its animals, birds, and fish, it is only known to the Lord Creator: it has rocks and mountains which break and shatter to pieces all vessels that are driven against them; and its great roaring and noise, with the agitation of its waves, astonish the hearer and terrify the beholder, and at the same time exhibit the wonderful power of the Omnipotent Creator.'

Still more satisfactory, if possible, is the traditional account of some other natives, who stated that 'the river Cowára runs through mountains, and a great many woods and forests; and has mountains on the north and east. This great river issues from the mountains of the Moon; and what we know of it is, that it comes from Sookau to Kiga, &c.* It is remarkable, that amidst all this jumble of nonsense, Clapperton met at Tabra, in Nouffie, with the theory which has proved the true one. He was there told, that the Quorra, another of the Niger's many names, '*ran into the sea behind Benin*, at Funda.'† This description, though accompanied with details

* Clapperton, p. 340.

† Ibid.

which, no doubt, prepossessed the traveller against it, happens to be as correct as possible.

But to rejoin our party at Boossà ;—the remainder of their expedition was a continuous though much delayed descent of the Niger to its mouth, which occupied them from the first of August, when they left the city just mentioned, until the middle of November. The river was now somewhat swollen, and the current occasionally ran at the rate of five or six miles an hour : in other respects the description already given of the upper section applies with some qualification to the lower, and there is especially the same diversity of wide and narrow, and shallow and deep. The same is true of the scenery. More frequently the banks are low and very fertile ; but in the neighborhood of Lever, which was passed in the month of October, they were forty feet above the level, and steep to the water-side. Here, for some dozen miles, the Niger ‘rolled grandly along, a noble river, neither obstructed by islands, nor deformed with rocks and stones :’—the width being from one to three miles. Then comes a range of moderate hills. Then Mount Kesa springs up in the middle of the stream, to the height of three hundred feet, almost perpendicular. Then the borders of the river are ‘exceedingly flat, low and swampy,’ and appeared as though they were partially overflowed ; for trees and shrubs were shooting up in many places out of the body of the latter : and this, on the whole, was the prevailing character of the country, especially as the travellers approached the termination. They floated down thirty miles one night, in a terrific storm, for want of a ‘bit of dry land,’ whereupon to lodge ; and they were after all glad to fasten the canoe to the branches of a thorn-tree in the middle of the stream, and to sleep with their legs dangling over the sides of the little vessel into the water. It could not have added materially to the comfort of this situation, that the crocodiles and hippopotami had for some time been plashing and snorting about the canoe, so near, that the Englishmen thumped them with the breech of their muskets, while the poor natives on board absolutely yelled with dismay and consternation. Richard Lander took the liberty to deposit a bullet in or about the nostrils of one ; but the game did not prove profitable, for not only all that were afloat before, but a vigorous reinforcement from the mud below, forthwith commenced so close a pursuit that the blacks were under the necessity of howling and paddling

still louder and longer than before, and had much difficulty to escape, at the best. 'However, the terrible hippopotami,' adds Richard, 'did us no kind of damage whatever.' In the course of the twenty-four hours during which this affair took place, the travellers accomplished about one hundred miles of their journey. The river presented a very magnificent appearance, being nearly *eight miles* in width.

By the middle of October, the waters were much higher. The abundant rice-grounds had for some distance been overflowed; but now the villages themselves were frequently in the same situation. No people, perhaps, (unless it may be one in the south of Russia, described by Clarke,) live quite so much, generally, in, under and upon the water, as the natives of this region; but the present emergency was too severe for them. One unfortunate little town was floated off altogether, with the exception of a few huts. The travellers approached this spot as near as possible, to make inquiries about the route. They 'bawled,' and 'hallooed,' till they were tired, to a party of the good citizens who were walking through the *streets*, knee-deep in water; but no answer was given them. Finally, a priest informed them, that the Niger, being unusually full this season, had washed away a considerable portion of their village;—'which,' adds our informant with an air of simplicity, 'was apparent from the great number of frames of huts we had seen stuck in the sand outside, more especially the circular tops of them, *which had a very odd appearance in the river.*' We are inclined to believe, that the citizens were not much flattered with the somewhat particular attention of the travellers at this juncture;—they could hardly entertain them to advantage. Again;—the town of Egga, it is said, is of prodigious extent, and has an immense population; and a large part of that place too was overflowed. Of Brass town, a considerable mercantile place near the mouth of the river, which the travellers reached November 15th, we cannot do better than to give their own account.

'Of all the wretched, filthy, and contemptible places in this world of ours, none can present to the eye of a stranger so miserable an appearance, or can offer such disgusting and loathsome sights, as this abominable Brass town. Dogs, goats, and other animals run about the dirty streets half starved, whose hungry looks can only be exceeded by the famishing appearance of the men, women, and children, which bespeaks the penury and

wretchedness to which they are reduced ; while the persons of many of them are covered with odious biles, and their huts are falling to the ground from neglect and decay.

‘Brass, properly speaking, consists of two towns, of nearly equal size, containing about a thousand inhabitants each, and built on the borders of a kind of basin, which is formed by a number of rivulets, entering it from the Niger, through forests of mangrove bushes. One of them is under the domination of a noted scoundrel called *King Jacket*, who has already been spoken of ; and the other is governed by a rival chief, named *King Forday*. These towns are situated directly opposite each other, and within the distance of eighty yards ; and are built on a marshy ground, which occasions the huts to be always wet. Another place, called “Pilot’s town” by Europeans, from the number of pilots that reside in it, is situated nearly at the mouth of the First Brass River (which we understand is the “*Nun*” river of Europeans,) and at the distance of sixty or seventy miles from hence. This town acknowledges the authority of both kings, having been originally peopled by settlers from each of their towns. At the ebb of the tide, the basin is left perfectly dry, with the exception of small gutters, and presents a smooth and almost unvaried surface of black mud, which emits an intolerable odor, owing to the decomposition of vegetable substances, and the quantity of filth and nastiness which is thrown into the basin by the inhabitants of both towns. Notwithstanding this nuisance, both children and grown-up persons may be seen sporting in the mud, whenever the tide goes out, all naked, and amusing themselves in the same manner as if they were on shore.’—Vol. II. pp. 253, 254.

But this, as we have already hinted, is by no means to be taken for a specimen of the entire banks of the Niger, even during the rainy season. In many parts the navigation and the scenery, by night as well as day, were really delightful. The islands, which are numerous and sometimes very large, were almost universally the most lovely and fertile spots to be conceived. Patashie, (some forty or fifty miles below Boossà,) an island fifteen miles in length, is said to be ‘large, rich and unspeakably beautiful ;’ it is embellished with superb groves of palm and other noble trees ; while the soil is so fertile, and the natives so frugal,—a rare virtue with their race,—that not an acre on the island is left without cultivation.

October 4th, the journal says :

‘The banks of the river near Lever are high, being, according to our estimation, about forty feet above the river, and steep to

the water-side. The river itself appeared deep, and free from rocks of any kind ; its direction nearly south. We ran down the stream very pleasantly for twelve or fourteen miles, the Niger, during the whole of the distance, rolling grandly along—a noble river, neither obstructed by islands nor deformed with rocks and stones. Its width varied from one to three miles ; the country on each side was very flat, and a few mean, dirty-looking villages were scattered on the water's edge. We then came to two small islands ; the land appeared more elevated, and in some few places it rose in gentle hills. We observed three remarkable and lofty hills on the eastern side, which rose very abruptly from the plain, and were separated from each other only by a few yards of ground. Both banks of the river were overhung with large shady trees, between which we could perceive the land behind to be open and well cultivated ; and, if we may be allowed to form an opinion from the number of towns and villages which were scattered over the country, we should conceive it to be thickly inhabited also.'—Vol. II. p. 43.

October 5th :

' Just below the town of *Bajiebo*, the Niger spreads itself into two noble branches, of nearly equal width, formed by an island. We preferred journeying on the eastern branch, but for no particular reason. The country beyond the banks was very fine. The island in the middle of the river is small, but verdant, woody, and handsome ; and we passed by the side of it in a very few minutes, with considerable velocity. It was then that both banks presented the most delightful appearance. They were embellished with mighty trees and elegant shrubs, which were clad in thick and luxuriant foliage, some of lively green, and others of darker hues ; and little birds were singing merrily among their branches. Magnificent festoons of creeping plants, always green, hung from the tops of the tallest trees, and, drooping to the water's edge, formed immense natural grottoes, pleasing and grateful to the eye, and seemed to be fit abodes for the Naiads of the river.'—Vol. II. p. 46.

Richard Lander some where observes, that African scenery, in its best estate, is not to be compared with that of old Albion ; and there is truth as well as simplicity in the remark. It is a magnificent, barbarous profusion, on one hand, while on the other, it is the regular and refined beauty of civilization. There, nature runs wild as the Grecian personification of Dian, —her zone unbound, and her ringlets blown loosely by the gale. Here, she is dressed and decked. There, she speaks to the senses ; here, to the soul.

Soon after leaving the coast, our journalists say :

‘Between six and seven o’clock, A. M., we continued our route through woods and large open patches of ground, and, at about eleven in the forenoon, arrived at the borders of a deep glen, more wild, romantic and picturesque than can be conceived. It is enclosed and overhung on all sides by trees of amazing height and dimensions, which hide it in deep shadow. Fancy might picture a spot, so silent and solemn as this, as the abode of genii and fairies; every thing conducing to make it grand, melancholy and venerable; and the glen only wants an old dilapidated castle, a rock with a cave in it, or something of the kind, to render it the most interesting place in the universe. There was one beautiful sight, however, which we would not omit mentioning for the world;—it was that of an incredible number of butterflies, fluttering about us like a swarm of bees: they had chosen this, no doubt, as a place of refuge against the fury of the elements. They were variegated by the most brilliant tints and colorings imaginable—the wings of some were of a shining green, edged and sprinkled with gold; others were of sky-blue and silver; others of purple and gold, delightfully blending into each other; and the wings of some were like dark silk velvet, trimmed and braided with lace.’—Vol. I. p. 88.

On the same route, across the country :

‘We traversed a rich and varied country, abounding plentifully with wood and water. A fine red sand covered the pathway, which we found to be in much better condition than any we had before seen. Sometimes it wound through an open, level tract of fine grazing land; and then again it diverged through forests so thick and deep that the light of the moon, which had arisen, was unable to penetrate the gloom, and we were frequently left in midnight darkness. It would require greater powers than we are in possession of to give an adequate description of the magnificence, solemnity, and desolate repose of the awful solitudes through which we passed this evening. They were enlightened, however, at times by the appearance of glow-worms, which were so luminous that one could almost see to read by their golden splendor; and sometimes by the moon-beams, which trembled upon the leaves and branches of the trees. A fragrance also was exhaled from the forest, more odoriferous than the perfume of primroses or violets; and one might almost fancy, when threading his way through scenery which perhaps cannot be surpassed for beauty in any part of the world, that he was approaching those eternal shades where in ancient time the souls

of good men were supposed to wander. The woods rang with the song of insects and night-birds, which saluted us, with little intermission, till about ten o'clock at night.'—Vol. I. p. 96.

Again :

'The scenery of to-day has been more interesting and lovely than any we have heretofore beheld. The path circled round a magnificent, cultivated valley, hemmed in almost on every side with mountains of granite of the most grotesque and irregular shapes, the summits of which are covered with stunted trees, and the hollows in their slopes occupied by clusters of huts, whose inmates have fled thither as a place of security against the ravages of the *war-men* that infest the plains. A number of strange birds resort to this valley, many of whose notes were rich, full, and melodious, while others were harsh and disagreeable; but, generally speaking, the plumage was various, splendid, and beautiful. The modest partridge appeared in company with the magnificent Balearic crane, with his regal crest; and delicate humming-birds hopped from twig to twig, with others of an unknown species: some of them were of a dark shining green: some had red silky wings and purple bodies: some were variegated with stripes of crimson and gold; and these chirped and warbled from among the thick foliage of the trees.'—Vol. I. p. 130.

Some of these extracts convey a pretty good idea of the soil, climate, productions and population, as well as scenery, of the regions referred to. The former, however, are much more uniform than the latter, from the obvious circumstance, that many of those lands and locations which were most suitable for agricultural and mercantile purposes, for the very same reasons made the least or the worst possible appearance. The inhabitants raise immense quantities of rice, particularly upon tracts suited to that grain. They are also very fond of attending and trafficking at markets and fairs, and the more accessible, therefore, a large town can be made to a log-canoe, the more popular and profitable to all concerned is the rendezvous. Richard Lander observes, in one or two cases, without going into minutiae, that he 'presumes' the inhabitants understand their own policy in this matter, though he does not seem to have valued it very highly himself.

We have named some of the productions common to the entire length of the route,—rice, cotton, indigo, and corn. The latter grows in great abundance, sometimes to the height of ten or twelve feet; and if the account given of the cultivation

between Boossà and Yàoorie applies generally, it at least indicates that the natives appreciate the worth of the article. On the banks of all the numerous branches of the river, and on all the islands, we are told that 'vast quantities of corn were growing,' which, it being near harvest-time, was nearly ripe, and waved over the water's edge very prettily. Platforms,—closely resembling a gallows, we infer from the engraving,—are every where built in these fields, so as to overlook the grain; and here boys, girls, and now and then a woman with a child at her breast, or even a whole family, station themselves by the day together, in the blaze of a fierce sunshine, for the commendable purpose of acting as scare-crows. Some are content to stand stock-still for hours, looking like statues of ebony. Others amused themselves by plaiting straw or weaving mats, rather to the detriment of the corn, and the gratification, no doubt, of the adversary. A third and probably younger class magnified their office by the free use of slings and stones; beside which, 'pieces of rope were fastened from the platform to a tree at some distance, to which large calabashes were suspended, with holes in them through which sticks were passed [or a handful of pebbles thrown in,] so that when the rope is pulled they make a loud clattering noise.' The Yankees, when *they* mount the Niger, will certainly find a market for the well-known apparatus which they use in much the same manner for the same purpose. Theirs has indeed the advantage of auto-motion, or of being moveable by a light breeze, as well as of glittering in addition to clattering; but the African watchers, on the other hand, yell and howl in a manner dismal enough to frighten an evil spirit, (says Mr. Lander,)—which is no doubt a most desirable improvement to be introduced in these parts, if we had leisure, and liked sunshine. The African corn is so much stouter than ours, that a field of it is a sort of forest for the small game, and this makes them the more troublesome. Our travellers in one instance lament, that the ducks they had been in the habit of shooting for daily food, as they floated down the stream, had utterly balked their benevolent exertions to that end, by shrewdly availing themselves of a rampart of corn-stalks, behind which, like the gallant defenders of New Orleans, they could reconnoitre the enemy's movements with impunity.

Plantains, bananas, yams, beans, and other roots and fruits are exceedingly abundant over almost the whole region of the

Niger ; and these alone, without either the game, grain, or fish, which in most places may be as easily obtained with scarcely an effort, would be sufficient to support an immense population. Nor is there a country on earth better adapted to the raising of all kinds of domestic animals. Very generally indeed they *are* raised,—bullocks, mules, sheep, goats and poultry,—in vast numbers. In some districts they have no horses, and have hardly heard of such an animal ; but in others they carry the pride and perfection of the breed as far as their more civilized acquaintance. Two or three extracts will confirm some of these statements.

‘ **RABBA** [on the Niger, in the latitude of Sierra Leone, 9° N.] is famous for milk, oil, and honey. The market, when our messengers were there, appeared to be well supplied with bullocks, horses, mules, asses, sheep, goats, and abundance of poultry. Rice and various sorts of corn, cotton, cloth, indigo, saddles and bridles made of red and yellow leather, besides shoes, boots, and sandals, were offered for sale in great plenty. Although they observed about two hundred slaves for sale, none had been disposed of when they left the market in the evening. The inhabitants grow abundance of corn and rice, and other productions common to the neighboring countries, and they cultivate the plantain shrub with success. They possess large flocks and herds of the finest description, and their horned cattle are remarkable for their size and beauty. They have also a prodigious number of excellent horses, of which they take the greatest care, and they are universally admired for their strength and elegant proportions.’—Vol. II. p. 82.

Not very far from the mouth of the river, where the inundation chiefly occurred, the following passage appears in the Journal of November 12th.

‘ We passed the day in much the same manner as yesterday, stopping occasionally at certain villages which are scattered along the banks, for the purpose of bartering with their inhabitants. Plantains, bananas, and yams are cultivated by them to an extraordinary and almost incredible extent, and for the space of nearly twenty miles scarcely any thing else but plantations of these shrubs and vegetables are to be seen. This circumstance has led us to infer that the country is infinitely more populous than its general appearance would seem to indicate. It is flat, open, varied, and beautiful in many places, and its soil is a rich dark mould or loam.’—Vol. II. p. 246.

To show that this description does not apply to the banks of the Niger alone, we shall add a few sketches of the preliminary route from the coast to the river, a distance of several hundred miles, over hills, mountains, forests and plains, which occupied between two and three months. The starting-point was Badágyry, a small native kingdom in the British interest, on the northern coast of the Gulf of Guinea, in the same latitude with Liberia, the colony of the American Colonization Society, and not very remote from it. Here, we are told,

‘Oranges, limes, cocoa-nuts, plantains, and bananas are produced in abundance in the neighborhood. The better sort of people are possessed of a small kind of bullock, with sheep, goats, and poultry; the chief himself is a drover and butcher, and when in want of money he orders one of his bullocks to be slaughtered and publicly sold in the market. The dwellings of the inhabitants are neatly constructed of bamboo, and thatched with palm leaves. They contain several apartments, all of them on the ground-floor. Some of the houses or huts are built in the *coozie* form, which is nearly round, and others are in the form of an oblong square: all have excellent yards attached to them, wherein lime-trees and others are planted in rows, and it gives one pleasure to look at the cleanliness and taste which prevail in these courts. The land is excessively fertile; and if the natives could only be induced to lay aside their habitual indolence, and the sluggishness of their characters, and devote a little more attention to the improvement of the soil, the country might soon be brought to an extraordinary pitch of beauty and perfection. As it is, vegetation springs forth spontaneously, is luxuriant even to rankness, and is ever pleasingly verdant.’—Vol. I. p. 76.

A fortnight after leaving this place for the interior, and a little beyond the great market-town, EGGA, the travellers say,

‘We found the path in much better condition than those behind it, and it lay almost entirely through plantations of yams, calavances, and pumpkins, and three or four different varieties of corn, which a number of laborers were employed in weeding, &c. The hoe is the only implement of husbandry in use, and indeed they can well dispense with every other, because the soil during the rainy months is so soft and light that but very little manual exertion in working it is required.’—Vol. I. p. 121.

Next comes DUFO, April 26th:

‘The inhabitants appear to be industrious and very opulent,
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as far as regards the number and variety of their domestic animals, having abundance of sheep, goats, swine, pigeons, and poultry; among the latter of which we observed, for the first time, turkeys and Guinea fowl. They have likewise horses and bullocks.'—Vol. I. p. 133.

Then, under date of May 10th :

'LEOGUADDA is almost surrounded by rugged hills, formed by loose blocks of granite ; these, added to a quantity of tall trees, always green, and growing within the walls, render the town inconceivably pleasant and romantic. Immense tracts of land are cultivated in the vicinity of the town, with corn, yams, &c. ; and abundance of swine, poultry, goats, and sheep are bred by its inhabitants.'—Vol. I. pp. 158, 159.

The palm-tree is too well known to require description. As Lander some where remarks, it seems peculiarly intended by Providence for the untutored and destitute savage. It affords him a pleasant drink, and indeed the common and favorite drink, especially along the coast. The wine, as the juice is called, is obtained precisely as the juice of the maple is in this country for a different purpose. A hole is bored in the trunk of a tree, a spout made of a leaf inserted, and through this the liquor flows into a calabash beneath, which, holding two or three gallons, will probably be filled during the day. It soon assumes a milky appearance, and is generally used in that state ; if kept longer, it acquires rather a bitter flavor. The palm-tree also affords a valuable oil, of which immense quantities have been heretofore taken off by foreigners, particularly by Liverpool traders, from the coast and the lower part of the Niger and other rivers. The palm-wood is an excellent material in building the simple dwellings of the natives.

This tree becomes scarce as you advance into the interior, but from the Journal, as well as from Park and Caillié, we learn that its place is well supplied with the *mi-cadania*, or butter-tree, which yields a very savory and nutritious kind of vegetable marrow. The tree is said to resemble the oak. The nut is enveloped in an agreeable pulpy substance, and the kernel is about as large as our chestnut. This is exposed in the sun to dry, after which it is pounded very fine and boiled : the oily particles float ; and when cool, they are skimmed off, and made into little cakes fit for immediate use.

Not to pursue the catalogue further, it would really appear

that no country is furnished with greater capacities than the whole of Western Africa, on the banks and in the latitude of the Niger and its vast and various branches, for supporting a prodigious population. Already indeed the soil swarms with human inhabitants, in scarcely a less proportion than the streams with fish, or the forests with game. Immensely large, though not indeed elegant cities, are more frequent than, without so good evidence as we have, could possibly have been believed. Marts, fairs, festivals, and even *horse-races*, (and a most amusing picture is given in the *Journal* of one at Boossà) attended, some of them, by thousands of people, from all quarters, occur regularly, the year round; for no people on earth are more addicted to society, sport, bustle, or traffic.

Considering the abundant means of subsistence, this trading propensity is the only principle upon which we know how to explain a habit the good people in many parts of the country have of exposing for sale, and we presume selling and consuming, all manner of crawling and creeping things for food. Goat's-flesh and goora-nuts may pass muster well enough; but we should distinctly demur to several other matters which seem to be staples in the African market. In the district of Katunga, for instance, (on the inland route,) where open markets are said to be held daily, and are very largely attended twice a week, provisions were offered for sale in abundance; and besides beef and mutton, 'which were made up into little round balls, weighing about an ounce and three quarters, and presenting not the most tempting appearance, we observed an immense quantity of rats, mice and lizards, dressed and undressed, all having their skins on, and arranged in rows.' What idea our good friends would convey by 'dressed and undressed, with their skins on,'—a fashion of dish-able not generally ratified, we apprehend, among the community referred to,—it is not indispensable to determine. But, what is worse still, though the stalls of the celebrated city of Bòhoo, (on the same route,) are well supplied with provisions, they are so exceedingly dear, for some unknown reason, that 'with the exception of disgusting insects, reptiles and vermin, the lower classes of the people are almost unacquainted' with the taste of fresh meat. If this diet *could* be made acceptable to foreigners, there would certainly be one convenience in it, independently of gratifying the eye and the palate,—that

of being plentiful and always at hand ; for the travellers could hardly accommodate themselves with never so short a *siesta* in an African hut, or a nap under the green trees, but they would either wake or dream, presently, with the pleasurable sensation of a scorpion or a lizard leisurely dragging its slow length over the nostrils. Again ;—on the lower Niger they eat the solid fat of the hippopotamus, no small mass of which was once sent to our travellers as a special dainty. Fish and yams also were brought on, swimming in oil, the commonest kind used in the lamps of warehouses in England, and of course having an exceedingly ancient as well as fish-like odor. The English civilly declined this delicacy ; but Gun [*alias*, King Boy,] was of a different opinion, and, ‘ declaring it to be the best Liverpool beef that he had seen for a long time, he soon made away with it.’ Finally, the savages of Fernando Po island eat monkeys. This is a species of taxation hardly to be tolerated by so intelligent a class of denizens ; and we apprehend that, by and by, endurance will be thought no longer a virtue,—especially as the human party seems to be rather the less intelligent if not numerous of the two.

Hyænas and crocodiles appear to be an aristocracy in this part of the world ; for the natives, instead of eating them or either of them, or even hanging them up, ‘ dressed and undressed, with their skins on,’ in the stalls, treat them, as well as themselves, with rats. A family which entertained the travellers on the inland route had hospitably kept a crocodile in a sort of pig-pen seven years, upon rations of five rats a day ; and the boys valued him so highly, that as the greatest courtesy they could show Mr. Lander, they offered to run down behind the hut and catch him half a dozen young crocodiles of the first water. He was under the disagreeable necessity of declining the favor, not having vehicles to accommodate so large a party. A few other incidents, which occurred about the same time, go to explain the singular dearness of the better kinds of animal food. The people were particularly fond and proud of their swine, sheep and poultry, so that they very generally ate, drank, and slept in common with them ; and the pampered animals, having their manners ruined by flattery, insolently nosed the travellers about in all directions, hundreds together. In one case, though the country was covered with them, not a morsel of that excellent food they are in duty

bound to furnish, could be obtained, for love or money. In another, the inhabitants, understanding that Englishmen were much given to devour chickens, and that, 'dead or alive, they would have some,' if they could, forthwith hastened to secure and confine the whole feathered community, the moment the travellers entered the village. The latter would have been chicken-hearted, truly, to resent a merely defensive movement; and they, therefore, with the philosophy which does so much credit to their countrymen in all situations, invariably contented themselves with wild game, yams, new milk, goats-meat, eggs, cocoa-nuts, and small beer.

There can be no better illustration than the territory of the Niger furnishes, of the extraordinary influence which soil, climate, and other external circumstances have, sooner or later, upon the social and civil character of a people. These Africans have had, most of them, no intercourse with civilized nations, and none of them so much as almost all our American Indians. If not greatly inferior, they are not superior to that race in native intellect; and as to their habits of thinking, it is universally characteristic of them that they act altogether from impulse, whereas the Indian is quite as remarkable for acting altogether from principle. But, setting aside the original differences of genius, and the original causes of them, whatever they may be, what a contrast is there in location and the immediate effects of location, between the two! In many respects, indeed, the same causes have led to the same customs. The African cowrie is almost identical, as a *coin*, with the Indian wampum. The medical art of both consists alike of roots, bathing, blistering, and charms. The extreme ignorance and credulity of both are equally imposed on by the mallam and the powah, with all their varieties of grimace, disguise, feigned madness, real impudence, and legerdemain. Both paint, sacrifice, build and use canoes, torture, feast, fast, keep themselves sober when compelled, and get drunk when they can. But in almost all those matters which indicate the gradual advance from perfect savagery to barbarism, and from barbarism to civilization, the talkative, thoughtless, yam-eating, sanguine Africans have exceedingly the vantage-ground of our intelligent and independent fellow-countrymen in the backwoods, with all their demureness, dignity and deliberation.

The latter, until after a long intercourse with foreigners, knew little or nothing of the useful metals; using clam-shells

for knives, bark for baskets, stone for weapons ; and even fitting the slow-wrought tomahawk with its handle by hanging it upon the green branch, and waiting for a growth sufficient for the aperture, at the very time when they were trampling under foot the scarce covered iron of Pennsylvania and the gold of Carolina. They had and still have, with few exceptions, no domestic animals but the dog. They wore skins and furs for clothing ; and went but half clad at the best, under one of the severest climates on earth. North of Mexico they had no cities,—no towns north of the Cherokees,—no markets, no schools, no division of labor, no diversity of ranks but such as the most radical democracy chose to create, and mainly no arts but those absolutely indispensable to subsistence and simple attack and defence.

We look for the explanation of these things in a stern sky and a sterile soil. The earth produces but little spontaneously, and pays but a small bounty on a difficult and tedious cultivation. The savage, therefore, always indolent, leaves the drudgery of his pitiful agriculture to women, and lives by fishing and hunting, which have at least the charm of adventure. But, to subsist thus, he must have a broad range of woods and waters, especially where the game is very wild and rather sparse. Population is scattered, perhaps in the ratio of an individual to a square mile. Society is broken up. Tribes must be small. Each, in his solitude, must be independent of every other : and after all, such circumstances will not only soon give him a sullen, suspicious, selfish character, but will really leave him very little leisure, and less inducement to use the little he has to any considerable purpose. As to arts, his skins and furs are the best as well as cheapest clothing in his climate ; and for other luxuries, what time has he to conceive or contrive them, and what inducement to do so if he could ? He builds, hunts, eats, fights, and sleeps : he has followed his instincts and gratified his appetites ; no man has heard him complain, or seen him weep or wince under suffering ; and this is enough,—‘it is good,’—he dies, and is forgotten.

The African is not so satisfied, and has reason not to be so. The earth, air, sea, streams, and woods, around and beneath, pour out to him an easy and healthy subsistence at his very door. He needs little or no vesture or shelter. Of course, he has leisure enough to desire more just in proportion as he demands less. Good living and good health, and genial skies,

stimulate the animal spirits ; and a crowded population, in the same circumstances and with the same sanguine and sociable disposition as himself, furnishes all the opportunity of excitement which his passions and whims may suggest. Restlessness, avarice, ambition, vanity, natural affection, affability, all spring up, and must be gratified. People throng together in towns and cities, and at fairs and festivals in the country. Distinctions of rank arise from distinctions of wealth. The arts are encouraged by all these circumstances together, and by the liveliness to which they all rouse the faculties of invention. The African has no wants to think of, and he imagines as many as possible. He dresses, dances, sings, sports an elegant canoe, prides himself on his horse, goes to market twice a week, drinks too much palm-wine as often, lies down to sleep in the shade, and wakes to follow the same routine of noise, novelty and nonsense, from his cradle to his grave.

Some of the extracts already given from the *Journal* indicate the extent to which the Niger tribes have carried agriculture, and various mechanic arts. Their canoes in some parts of the country are large, elegant and commodious ; and though made of a single tree, built up with sides of plank, sheds are raised in them, with circular roofs, in which fires are kindled, food prepared, and men, women and children and all manner of domestic animals accommodated,—very much, we suppose, as they once were in the Kentucky arks,—so that ‘merchants are enabled to travel, with their wives and household, several days up and down the Niger,’ without landing. Iron staples supply the office of pitch, hemp and tar.—Rabba is famous for very beautiful mats and sandals. Other articles are supplied by their neighbors of Zagōzhi, an account of whom will serve to illustrate the general advance of civilization.

‘The cloth which they manufacture in common with their countrymen, and the tobies and trousers which they make, are most excellent, and would not disgrace an European manufactory : they are worn and valued by kings, chiefs, and great men, and are the admiration of the neighboring nations, which vainly attempt to imitate them. We have also seen a variety of caps, which are worn solely by females, and made of cotton, interwoven with silk, of the most exquisite workmanship. The people here are uncommonly industrious, be they males or females, and always busy, either in culinary or other domestic occupations.

In our walks we see groups of people employed in spinning

cotton and silk ; others in making wooden bowls and dishes, mats of various patterns, shoes, sandals, cotton dresses and caps, and the like ; others busily occupied in fashioning brass and iron stirrups, bits for bridles, hoes, chains, fetters, &c. ; and others again employed in making saddles and horse accoutrements. These various articles, which are intended for the Rabba market, evince considerable taste and ingenuity in their execution.'—Vol. II. pp. 84, 85.

Even the fine arts are not neglected, and least of all dancing and singing. At Layaba, a little below Boossà,

'In the evening, the inhabitants of the town assembled outside our house, to amuse themselves by dancing and singing in the moonlight ; for, notwithstanding all their misfortunes and oppressions, they never refrain from indulging with all their hearts in these sprightly and thoughtless entertainments. Every dancer held in each hand a cow's tail ; they were all dressed grotesquely, and a great quantity of strings of cowries encircled their legs and bodies, which made a loud rattling noise by the violence and celerity of their movements. They sang as they danced, and excited, by the oddity of their gestures, loud clappings of applause, and bursts of laughter from all the bystanders. The spectacle was exceedingly ludicrous : we have rarely witnessed so much jocularity and thoughtless gayety ; and we have seldom laughed so much at any native exhibition. Though the performers panted from want of breath with their exertions, they yet continued their darling exercises, as is usual with them, till long after midnight.'—Vol. II. pp. 39, 40.

This accomplishment is patronized by all classes and ages. The old chief of Egga is an example of one extreme, and the Kakafungi boys of the other.

'The old man advanced proudly into the ring, with a firm step and a smiling countenance, and casting upon us a glance full of meaning, as if he would have said, "Now, white men, look at me, and you will be filled with admiration and wonder,"—

"He frisked beneath the burden of *five-score* ;"

and, shaking his hoary locks, capered over the ground to the manifold delight of the bystanders, whose applauses, though confined, as they always are, to laughter, yet tickled the old man's fancy to that degree, that he was unable to keep up his dance any longer without the aid of a crutch. With its assistance he hobbled on a little while ; but his strength failed him, and he was

constrained for the time to give over, and he sat himself down at our side on the threshold of the hut. He would not acknowledge his weakness to us for the world, but endeavored to pant silently, and suppress loud breathings, that we might not hear him.'—Vol. II. p. 115.

'Late in the evening, when our people were asleep, the sound of singing tempted my brother to go out alone, and he soon discovered a little group of thoughtless, happy creatures, amusing themselves by dancing in the moonlight to the sound of a large drum. He described their dance as being very different from that practised in Yarriba; their motions being sometimes swift and violent, and sometimes slow and graceful; their gestures expressive of mild delight rather than vehement passion, and remarkable for propriety. They appeared to be singing something very comic in recitative, and kept time by clapping their hands. My brother's intrusion was of no importance to them, for the party still kept up their dance with as much spirit and good-humor as before.'—Vol. I. p. 225.

The natives have a peculiar taste for instrumental music, if music indeed it be; and no public occasion can be suffered to pass off without as much noise as some ten or twenty lusty fellows can possibly make upon all manner of horns, drums, fifes, bells and clarionets. At Wow,

'Two of the principal persons came out to meet us, preceded by men bearing large silk umbrellas, and another playing a horn, which produced such terrible sounds, that we gladly took refuge, as soon as we could, in the chief's house.'—Vol. I. p. 85.

One potentate condescended to take lessons from John Lander, on the English jews-harp; but, although he spent a whole evening in his awkward attempts, and a ring of his admiring countrymen encouraged every appearance of success with prodigious shouts of applause, the undue size of his majesty's mouth, and the length of his teeth, proved to be obstacles which no ambition could surmount. He wheezed away several hours to no purpose, and abandoned the undertaking. At Katunga, the chief enlivened the *paláver* by employing a stout fellow to whistle; and when he sent out an escort to meet the travellers, Richard Lander says,

'I sounded my bugle, at which the natives were astonished and pleased; but a black trumpeter, jealous of the performance, challenged a contest for the superiority of the respective instru-

ments, which terminated in the entire defeat of the African, who was hooted and laughed at by his companions for his presumption, and gave up the trial in despair. He hung down his head, remained silent, looked extremely silly, and did not venture to put his horn to his mouth again till he imagined his companions had either overlooked, or in some measure forgotten his defeat. Among the instruments used on this memorable occasion was a piece of iron, in shape exactly resembling the bottom of a parlor fire-shovel. It was played on by a thick piece of wood, and produced sounds infinitely less harmonious than "marrow-bones and cleavers."—Vol. I. p. 162.

In regard to education, it must be admitted that the Africans can boast of little superiority over the Indians. The only thing among them purporting to be a school, so far as we can learn, is attributable to the Mahommedan Mallam; and the entire process, from beginning to end, is only a repetition of prayers, which, however, seem to imply reading, writing and spelling. In this vocation they are truly zealous. The children of the respectable class at Egga, for example, are placed, at a very early age, under the schoolmaster's charge. For several years, they rise every morning between midnight and sunrise, and are studiously employed in copying the prayers by lamp-light, after which they read them to the master successively, commencing with the eldest. The Mahommedans, who constitute a considerable part of the population almost universally, are exceedingly vain of their literary accomplishments, and those of their children, and not unfrequently witness, with great satisfaction, the displays which the latter make of their progress. The general criterion of excellence appears to be in the lungs and larynx; that youth being considered the most promising, and caressed accordingly, who, in reading, can make his shrill bawling cadences heard to the greatest distance in the open air. To this discipline, probably, is owing the extreme vociferousness of the adults, which assailed the Landers so often, and which was so valuable to the proprietors in supplying the office of a speaking-trumpet on the water, and a fish-horn upon land.

The African governments much resemble those of the ancient Virginian Indians, being less democratic than those of our more northern tribes, and less permanent than the Mexican. Generally, the power is hereditary; but the ruling chief is not, by that custom, prevented either from electing one of his family to

succeed him, or from abdicating his authority whenever he sees fit. He has many privileges and perquisites of station, including horses, a body-guard, a band of musicians, a bigger hut, more cows' tails and other paraphernalia, more wine and more beer than any of his subjects; besides which, he exercises as much despotism, with as much impunity, in legislation and the administration of justice, as leaders chosen or tolerated by democracies generally do in other parts of the world.

The old historian, Beverly, says, that a Virginian sachem, at a solemn conference with the English, being *interrupted* in his speech by one of his own subjects who unfortunately forgot custom in a fit of anger, instantly cleaved the offender's head in twain with his hatchet, and then, deliberately wiping the blood from the edge of it, returned the weapon to his girdle, and gravely proceeded with his speech. Even our northern chiefs assumed both judicial and executive powers with as little hesitation. King Philip shot down a man who proposed peace with the English. Tecumseh, whose manners were far from ferocious, being insulted at Vincennes, by a deaf Pottawatamie called the Dead Chief, took no notice of him at the time, nor even looked in his face; but, after finishing a conversation with a white man, gave orders to his satellites which saved all further trouble,—the Dead Chief being never afterwards heard of.

So that famous Seneca, the Little Farmer, meeting, during the last war, in the streets of Buffalo, in a spy's disguise, one of the tribe who had been living in Canada, ordered his attendants to kill him on the spot. They refused, and murmured loudly against the command. Fire flashed in the eye of the old warrior. 'I am ashamed,' said he, 'I am ashamed that a Seneca will refuse to do justice. I will show you who the chief is.' He addressed the spy, and bade him prepare for death. The poor fellow knew him but too well. He drew his blanket over his head, with an Indian's dogged resignation, and sat down. The Farmer brained him at the same moment.*

Just such is the African manner of doing business. Our travellers often complained to the chiefs of the intolerable curiosity of the people, who thronged about their miserable little lodging-places, night and day, whenever they undertook

* We have this anecdote from a gentleman well acquainted with the Senecas during the last twenty years.

to sit or sleep, till they were scarcely able to breathe. ‘Cut their heads off,’ said the chiefs, and the influence of the Englishmen was sometimes necessary to prevent the adoption of that summary course. Their priests and other favorites take the same liberties. At Ephraim-town, the village-doctor was tied neck and heels with one of the Duke’s wives, and thrown into the river, as a punishment for making more visits to the lady his patient than was thought politic by his Grace. In another case, a boy was sentenced to death for stealing a bit of Manchester cotton from his sovereign ; and at the same village the travellers were relieved from too much society by a guard of stout cudgellers, who laid about among the visitors in a manner which soon left little to be desired.

This union of despotism and democracy, the extremes of which always meet, is a principal cause of the *slavery* which is another universal characteristic of the African policy, more peculiar to themselves than any yet mentioned. Messengers sent to collect tribute or taxes, in default of payment seize upon any stragglers from the community in debt, for slaves, with as little ceremony as a Yankee constable escorts a rioter to the penitentiary. Hard labor out of prison is more obvious than hard labor within ; and all culprits, therefore, who are not executed, become vassals, or villeins, much after the old fashion of England.—This class includes a large number of sorcerers, wizards and witches, who at other times are dealt with according to the civilized code in such cases provided. Still another source of slavery is war, whereby, population being abundant, and warlike arts and arms quite harmless, many more prisoners are taken than drops of blood shed ; and these too must be disposed of in the cheapest and safest way. Hundreds are sometimes enslaved thus at one time, though an instance is alluded to in the *Journal*, wherein a violent contest of seven years, between two rival potentates, resulted in no other loss on either side than the capture of one old woman. The slaves are generally well treated, the most unfortunate being those miserable wretches who are conveyed down the river for the supply of the trade on the coast. Occasionally, they constitute as much the larger part of the whole population, as in ancient Athens, or in some of the West Indies at this day ; in one kingdom, no less than four-fifths.

On the whole, the Africans of the Niger are certainly much above absolute barbarism ; and yet, in many points wherein,

according to our theory, their external advantages have not operated equally in their favor, they are degraded proportionally beneath even those whom they otherwise excel. Their dwellings are generally almost unfit for the swine and vermin who hold them in joint-tenancy with themselves. Sacrifices, tortures, the dooming of widows, polytheism and polygamy are more or less in vogue. The people are ferocious in some parts, filthy in others, and extremely simple, credulous and superstitious in all. In array and revenue alone, the rulers have an advantage over the Indian chiefs; in personal dignity and domestic comfort they are not to be compared. An English shed is a palace, in contrast with their best houses; and, indeed, the travellers thought most of them much less tolerable than an indifferent 'pig-sty.' One of the best was precisely in the shape of the roof of a barn inverted, with only a hole through the inward apex for the emission or admission of smoke, light, rain, air and scorpions. Leaving various other minutæ to the reader's imagination, we may say of the African *cities* that their size is their chief recommendation, and confirm the remark by extracting our travellers' sketches of **BAJIEBO** and **ZAGŌZHI**. Both are situated on the Niger.—The former being one of the most populous marts on its whole length, we allow it the precedence in description.

'For dirt, bustle and nastiness of all kinds, this place, we think, can scarcely be exceeded. For two hours after our arrival we were obliged to wait in a close and diminutive hut, till a more convenient and becoming habitation could be procured for our reception, and the pleasure of the chief with regard to us should be known. Here we were visited by a number of the inhabitants, consisting both of *Falátahs* and *Noufanchie* (*Nouffie* people). Among the former was a sagacious and intelligent old man, who has travelled a long, long way on the Niger, even beyond *Timbuctoo*; and he states, that that town is several miles from the banks of the river. We were sadly incommoded by these visitors, who scarcely allowed us to move or breathe; which, joined to the heat of the weather and the insufferable stench, rendered our situation truly comfortless and distressing.

'We were at length removed from this horrible hole, and conducted to a hut in the heart of the town, in which wood fires had been burning the whole of the day, so that the wall was almost as warm as the sides of a heated oven, insomuch that it could hardly be endured. Yet, to render it more unpleasant still, a large, closely-woven mat was placed before the door-way, in

order to prevent a thousand eyes from staring in upon us : this excluded every breath of air.'—Vol. II. pp. 43, 44.

As for Zagōzhi,

'The town is built on a bog, for such it appears to us, and it lies so close to the water, that in fact hundreds of huts are literally standing in it. So little regard do the people appear to have for what is termed comfort, that they suffer the walls of their dwellings either to fall to pieces, or permit large chinks and holes to remain in them, which freely admit the wind and rain; while the floors, which are made of earth or clay, are so soft and damp, that a slender stick may easily be thrust into them by the hand to any depth.'—Vol. II. p. 83.

We cannot dismiss these exceedingly entertaining volumes, without a passing acknowledgment of that noble liberality which, for the last half century in particular, has distinguished the British Government, and not less the Association for promoting African discovery, in their movements upon that continent. Some of them indeed have been attended with deplorable calamity, and many have ended in disappointment; but the more honor, for these very reasons, belongs to the perseverance which has at length triumphed over all obstacles. Hereafter, the Niger will be as accessible a haunt of the steam-boat, as the Missouri has just been shown to be to the mouth of the Yellow Stone; and for some time to come, accessible to a much better purpose. An immense trade will be carried on with the Africans, opening a new and vast avenue for foreign manufactures and foreign navigation. Such, at least, should be the ultimate result; for where is there, on earth, a people more easily to be civilized, or a country filled with such inexhaustible materials for industry, wealth and commerce? The slave-trade, indeed, must be swept from the coast, before many advances can be made. But what surer mode can be adopted for that end, than to seal those prolific sources of the curse which exist in the indolence and ignorance of the abused natives, and to fortify them in better habits by the protection and the interest of a legitimate traffic? Certain it is, under present circumstances, that no more promising system is likely to be set in motion; and certain it also is, that the evil in question never was more flagrant than it has been during the last fifteen years. Something has been done; enough indeed by the Liberian Colony alone, to indicate the true course to be pursued. But na-

tional legislation, and a few cruisers and prize-courts of limited jurisdiction, are not destined to accomplish the object. Nothing short, we conceive, of such a final civilization as will make agriculture and honest trade more honorable and profitable in the eyes of the natives than the traffic in slaves, and nothing less than an actual occupation of the exposed coast meanwhile, can be reasonably expected to rescue this rich and fair region from the ferocious iniquity which has been so many ages gloating over its barbarism, and gorging itself with its blood.

ART. V. *American Forest Trees.*

Sylva Americana. By D. J. BROWNE. Boston. 1831.

The word *Sylva* can never be pronounced, without recalling the memory of Evelyn, who, retired and unambitious as he was, has long been numbered among the benefactors of mankind. It was no small service, to recommend the cultivation of ornamental trees, as a happy and elevating employment for men of leisure and fortune. Many a desolate village has been covered with beauty, and many a fiery street of the city shaded, in consequence of the enthusiasm inspired by his memory and example. Much too has been added to the glory of the visible world and the sources of philosophical contemplation, by taking these lords of the forest from their retirement, and placing them before the eye: for what nobler object can there be, than a tree which has battled with the storms of ages, and still calmly waves from it the assault of the mightiest gales, standing in lofty independence, and throwing wide its protecting arms, as if it were offering shelter and shade to generations yet to come? It is true there are many, to whom they would have little value, if regarded merely as materials and suggestions of thought; but there are none, to whom their usefulness does not make them important. Man must resort to them to build and furnish his dwelling, and then solicit their friendly shield to defend him from the summer sun. In winter, he must resort to them again; and they are ready to cast away their verdure 'to let in the sun,—and to light up his dwelling with their cheerful fires;' like feudal vassals, willing either to live or die in the service of their chief. Even nations also